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E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/12/2017
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [IR](#) [SA](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: IRAQ PARLIAMENT SPEAKER DISCUSSES "HISTORIC"
SESSION, CALLS FOR ANTI-IRAN ALLIANCE

Classified By: Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (S) Summary: During their February 9 meeting, Council of Representatives (CoR) Speaker Mashhadani called the final CoR session of this legislative term historic. After intense negotiations, the CoR passed the 2007 budget. The CoR debate over Sunni MoD Abdul Qader's testimony at this session (where the Shiite Itilaf coalition came to MoD Abdalkader's defense) made it plain to Mashhadani that MoD was beholden to the Shia. This, in addition to intelligence the Speaker received linking the MoD to financial corruption, was proof that the MoD had to be replaced. Mashhadani said Iranian influence is driving the Itilaf's call for a vote in support of expelling the Iranian opposition force Mujahideen Al Khalq. He asked for USG support in countering this move. Mashhadani said the Provincial Powers law would be the first passed by the CoR when it reconvenes in early March. End Summary.

HISTORIC COR SESSION

¶2. (C) The Speaker reported that the previous day's CoR Session was "historic", as he shepherded members to reach compromise on the social affairs budget, the formula for Peshmerga funding, and gaining Shiite Fadheela party buy-in to both items.

¶3. (C) He said that the debate over MoD Abdul Qader's testimony at the CoR, in particular the discussion over whether it should be opened or closed to the public, revealed that the MoD is under the protection of Itilaf. (Background Note: At the start of the session, SCIRI Minister of State Safa Al Safy questioned the legality of the procedures followed in calling MoD to testify. Itilaf CoR bloc leaders Jalal Eddin Al Sagheer and Hadi Al-Amiri raised points of order directed against Sunni Tawafuq bloc member Hussein Al-Falluji for the same reason. While Falluji, whose idea it was to invite Abdul Qader in the first place, wanted the session to be open to the public, Itilaf argued that, given the sensitive information that might arise in the course of the question and answer session, it should be closed. End Note.)

"EVIDENCE" OF ABDUL QADER LINKS TO CORRPUTION

¶4. (C) In addition, Mashhadani made reference to intel passed to him by the Jordanian Intelligence Services, which indicated that MoD had received financial backing from businessmen Qasim Al Raqi and Na'ir Jumaili. According to Mashhadani, Jumaili reportedly paid money to insurgency elements to stifle their opposition to Abdalkader's candidacy. However, Mashhadani continued, he was certain that MoD did not have any relationship to the Iraqi resistance.

¶15. (C) Mashhadani made reference to a petition passed around the CoR and signed by over 100 members calling for the CoR to vote in support of labeling MEK a terrorist organization and expelling it from Iraq. (Note: While visiting the EU Parliament in Brussels, Tawafuq leaders Adnan Dulaimi, Khalaf Ulayan, and Hewan Bloc leader Saleh Motluq urged the EU to take MEK off its list of terrorist organizations. End note.)

¶16. (C) The Speaker said that this anti-MEK resolution was Iranian-driven. Mashhadani said he delayed it until the next legislative session. He planned to appoint a "special committee" to study the matter and possibly visit Iran. Mashhadani argued that Iraq should consider expelling MEK only if it received significant concessions from Iran on security matters - such as action to stop funding Al Qaeda or supporting JAM.

¶17. (C) Mashhadani urged the US to look closely at the names of those who signed the petition - therein were all the "Iranian agents" at the CoR. He also asked that the US pressure the Kurds to vote against such a resolution. The Ambassador pointed out that a major obstacle to expelling MEK was that it was highly unlikely any other country would accept them as refugees.
SPECKHARD